

State Water Resources Control Board

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STATE WATER BOARD NAMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ***Calexico Native Familiar with Urban Economic and Rural*** ***Development, California-Mexico Border Issues***

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has named Celeste Cantú, 46, as the Executive Director for the statewide water policy Board.

“Cantú has more than 23 years of public service in California, and brings to the table her proven dynamic leadership and strategic decision-making skills,” explained SWRCB Chair Art Baggett, Jr.

Most recently, Cantú was the Chief Consultant for the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy. She has also served as the California State Director for the USDA’s Rural Development program.

For 12 years, Cantú was the Executive Director of the Imperial Valley Housing Authority, and she also served as Planning Director for the City of Calexico.

“This appointment reflects Governor Davis’ commitment to innovative government and water resource protection,” said California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Winston Hickox. “There is a new Board, a new Executive Director, and a new vision for the future of California water policy.”

Born and raised in rural Calexico on the Mexican border, Cantú’s professional career has reflected her personal commitment to improving the quality of life in rural California. Over the years, she has worked with a number of organizations which focused on border issues and overcoming various challenges.

“We’re very fortunate to have someone like Cantú, who has local, regional and legislative experience, coupled with the working knowledge of some of the key issues facing the Board,” Baggett added.

Cantú earned her MPA at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and her BA in Urban Planning at Yale University.

As Executive Director, Cantú will plan, organize and direct all activities of the SWRCB, including statewide policy development and coordinating efforts with the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

The State and Regional Boards have 1,775 positions statewide, and a combined annual budget of \$831 million.

The SWRCB’s mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California’s water resources, and ensure their efficient use to benefit present and future generations.

Cantú will start in mid-May, 2001.

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